The Life and Death

OF

Griffin Flood Informer.

Whoſe cunning courſes, churliſh manners, and troubleſome Informations, moleſted a number of plaine dealing people in this City of *London*.

Wherein is alſo declared the murther of *Iohn Chipperford* Vintner, for which fact the ſaid *Griffin Flood* was preſſed to death the 18. day of *Ianuary* laſt paſt.

L O N D O N,
Printed for *I. T.* and are to be ſold at the ſigne of the Bible without New-gate. 1623.

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Wherein is also declared the murther of *John Chipperford* Vintner, for which fact the said *Griffin Flood* was pressed to death the 18. day of *January* last past.

LONDON.
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The Life and Death of *Griffin Flood* Informer.

Of the bad condition, foule ſpeaches, and ill demeanor of Griffin Flood, *and how he became firſt to be an Informer.*

NOW firſt to make a character or deſcription of this *Griffin Flood*. He was a fellow of meane birth, rude bringing vp, ill inſtructed in eyther learning or good manners, harſh in ſpeach, and churliſh in condition, full of quarrels, ſtubborne and vnruly, and in briefe, of a moſt debauched condition, as by the ſequell may appeare.

But omitting theſe, and to come to particulars: he was in his yonger dayes bound Prentiſe with a Curtier or Dreſſer of leather, in which time of his ſeruice he picked ſuch quarrels among his fellow ſeruants, and followed them with ſuch cunning, as they being ouer-awed with his ſhamleſſe lying, were forced to ſubmit to whatſoeuer he pleaded againſt them, in ſo much that ſometimes they were faine to buy their peace with their purſes. And thus by his cunning informations of falſhoods to his Maſter and Miſtris, in which he commonly preuailed, he learned to tread the firſt ſtep to this troubleſome

blesome course of life, now named an Informer, where after being made a free-man of this City, he followed the same wayes, and became a great troubler of diuers other seruants and apprentises dwelling neere him, where if he found any that he knew, either in Tauerne, Alehouse, Bowling-alley, or Play-house, or else going abroad in Seruice time, when they should haue beene at the Church to the seruice of God with their masters, he would be sure to pick some feeling of money from them, or make it knowne to the displeasure of their parents or masters; all which these poore seruants and apprentises would doe before their names and credits should come in question.

Of the manner of his informations against Tapsters, Hostlers, Chamberlaines, and such like.

After this, entring further into this kind of life, and perceiuing some small gaine to come thereby, he began to haunt Alehouses, Innes, Hosteries, Cellars, and such like, where if hee found either forraine Tapster, Hostler, Chamberlaine, or any other party that was no free-man of this City; to him would he priuately come, and thus make his glose; My friend (quoth he) you being no freeman, but liue here by sufferance vnder your master, I vnderstand that there be certaine Informers which I know, that meane to trouble and sue you by action, and bring you in question for the wronging of the customes of this City, wherein no man must make his liuing by way of trading,

but such as haue serued seuen yeares an apprentise, or else made free-man by adoption or purchase; now if you will (quoth *Flood*) preuent this trouble and be my client, I will for a small matter defend you from the same, and cleare you from all Informers whatsoeuer, for I am an enemy to all such knaues whose purpose is to wrong such honest meaning men as you are, for my conscience drawes me to it, and I will proue honest therein. The poore country fellow being thus honied and loath to leaue his masters seruice, hath *Flood* downe into the cellar, makes him drinke, lends him money, and becomes so pliable to his conditions, that he is led vp and downe as with a twine threed, till a part of his meanes fals into this *Floods* purse; but no longer peny, no longer *pater noster*, the fellow growes weary, and is no longer able to feed *Floods* desires, but leaues him off, and submits himselfe to the triall of his action, where *Flood* as a cunning Iacke on both sides, followes him so close, that after much money spent, hee is forced to forsake his seruice, and to leaue the City, and the master of the same forraigner, is likewise brought to composition to be rid of this crafty Informer.

Another way of information that Flood vsed against forraigners and such like.

THis *Flood* also comes to another fellow being no free-man, where after the like conference as before, he takes vpon him, with the mans consent

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to bring him into action, and so to prevent all others of the like, declares against him by writ, and so it hangs in Court many yeares unfollowed by *Flood* for a monethly stipend received from the fellow thus sued: and so all other Informers were prevented for bringing him in question; for one of them by order of Law cannot take anothers case in hand. And thus *Flood* to his great benefit, dealt with many poore people in London.

How he troubled an honest Ale-wife not farre from Cripplegate: and how finely she requited him.

THere was an honest Alewife, whose name and dwelling I omit, not farre from Cripplegate, well known and reputed of among her neighbors, who kept in her house good lodging and orderly diet for entertainment of strangers and wayfaring men. Amongst others that resorted to her house, there was a forraigne Tailor, a very poore man, who ran more on the score for lodging and dyet, then he was able to pay, therefore to come out of her debt, he desired to work out the same, either in making new apparell, or mending of old: whereupon this Alewife put an old peticoat of hers to mend, which got the poore man but sixe-pence. Which matter this *Flood* hauing notice of, warned both her and her husband into the Court, for setting this forraigner on worke: where, doe what either he or she could, it cost them forty shillings, and so came home without any other comfort, for *Flood* had shared his part of the money, of which

he

he made no little brags amongst his Companions; but it fell out after a certaine time this *Flood* came againe to the said Alewifes house, thinking to find out another like Prize, where casting his knauish eye vp and downe, hee espied the good wife run downe into the Cellar with a blacke Pot or two, (measures contrary to the Cities custome) after followes *Flood*, and thinking to attach them, the woman hauing a ready wit, and now thinking to be reueng'd, caught vp a Pewter quart Pot, and lustily laid it vpon *Floods* pate, and most grieuously broke both his head and face, and withall cryed out with a loud voyce, Oh help, murther, murther, the noyse being heard not only vp into the house but abroad into the streets, caused many people come running in, and inquiring the matter, shee with fained teares cryed out hee would haue rauisht her and forst her against her will, and that she to defend her selfe had with a Pewter pot broake his face, wherevpon all the beholders knowing *Flood* to bee a very knaue, and beleeuing the woman by her teares to tell true, called for a Constable, who carried both *Flood* and the Alewife before a Iustice, where she standing stiffely in her accusation, he was committed to Prison, where hee lay with his broken pate and face, vntill such time as he had giuen the woman a good summe of money in composition for the supposed wrong hee had done her.

How Flood *churliſhly handled two Informers, and of his hatred againſt all Firken-men.*

AFter this, *Flood* becomming a little kinder to poore Ale-wiues, and vſing much to reſort to a Cookes houſe a Widdow, which often gaue him a breakfaſt to ſtay his knauiſh ſtomacke; whereupon (as the Diuell is good to ſome body) ſo this *Flood* ſtood cloſe to this woman in courteſie, and promiſed to defend her from all actions whatſoeuer; for indeed as then there were a couple of Informers had her in chaſe, and by no meanes could ſhee bee rid of them; for commonly they came once a moneth to her houſe and got mony of her: but it ſo hapned whilſt *Flood* was talking with this woman, that theſe two aforeſaid Informers came to her houſe, according to their accuſtomed manner, which *Flood* perceiuing, and being a little Pot-ſhaken, tooke vp a broome-ſtaffe and fell a bumbaſting them, and being all together by the eares downe in the kennell, *Flood* like a cunning knaue all begraueld and bedurtied his owne face, crying out they would murther him, and by that meanes ſo cunningly vſed the matter that his fellow-knaues were carried both to the Counter, whilſt hee being the third and worſt, eſcaped impriſonment. But now marke the ieſt, as they were going to Priſon, there comes by a luſty lubberly Firken-man, bearing out drinke to his Cuſtomers, a familiar friend and acquaintance of one of theſe Informers thus beaten, & hearing of theſe wrongs done

by

by *Flood*, falls vpon him and most brauely behangs him, & ſo amongſt the tumult of people gets him away vnknowne, and leaues *Flood* behind with the amends in his owne hands, ſeeking for hee could not tell whom: whereupon in mortall hatred, he ſought reuengement againſt all Firken-men; and for this one mans ſake vow'd to bee a plague to all the reſt, and ſo after that there could not bee a Firken-man ſtep out of dores, but hee would be on their iackes, eſpecially all thoſe that were forrainers, inſomuch, were hee but in the ſhape of a Firken-man, it was enough for him to ſet his knauiſh wit on worke: by this meanes many of them were inforced to buy their Freedomes, to their great charges. Others, that were of the poorer ſort, hee with his cunning-fram'd Actions affrighted from London. where they liued as before in much Pouerty.

How he troubled a poore Sheere-grinder, for relieuing his owne father.

Flood ſtill following theſe pittileſſe courſes, came vpon a time to a Sheere-grinders ſhop, where he ſaw a very poore Country old man turning the ſtone, which old man was the Sheere-grinders own father, and in loue to his ſonne took that paines to ſaue him from hiring one to doe the ſame worke, all this *Flood* noted, and with a harſh and commanding language, ſaid, my friend, quoth hee, how dareſt thou bee ſo bold as to ſet a Forreiner on worke, knowing that *Flood* ſtands here

as a witneſſe; I tell thee I will make thee repent it: theſe, and ſuch like threatning words not onely amazed the poore Sheare-grinder, but much grieued the old man: but to bee ſhort, in queſtion was hee brought, and cenſured by Order to giue ſatisfaction to *Flood* for his Information, and the old man was diſcharged from any further labour therin; but lay vpon his poore ſonne to be kept in charity: and thus was the cruelty of this *Flood* expreſſed to his ſhame and diſgrace.

How his harſh and churliſh dealing cauſed a poore Flaxe-maid to hang her ſelfe.

I Muſt not here omit his harſh dealing againſt a poore Flaxe-maid in London, who after ſhe had ſerued twelue yeares Prentiſe, and wearyed with that ſeruitude, tooke ſhop for her ſelfe, and ſet vp; of which Flaxe-maid when *Flood* had notice, hee came vnto her, from whom hee oftentimes got much money, and ſtill to buy her owne quietneſſe, (being not free but a forreiner) prouided ſtill for his cunning bribery, and had ſtill her money in readineſſe, ſo long, that in time ſhee grew weary of him, and not able to hold out any longer, ſhee reuealed it vnto a friend of hers, who counſelled her to get her freedome, which ſhee might eaſily doe, hauing ſerued twelue yeares Prentiſe, which counſell ſhee followed, and was made free of a worſhipfull Company, but not of the City, which was thought ſufficient for a womans ſecurity to follow Flaxe-dreſſing. Hereupon *Flood* perceiuing

uing his wonted benefits to faile, hammer'd in his knauiſh pate another trick of Information againſt her; ſo watching his time, hee eſpyed a Country Chapman buying a certaine parcell of Flaxe of her, and giuing her ſome earneſt thereof, as *Flood* tooke hold of by witneſſe, hee preſently tooke poſſeſſion thereof, as goods forreine bought and forreine ſold, and recouer'd them by way of Action, which was a great hinderance both to the Flaxe-maid, and to the Countrey Chapman: but to be ſhort, the maid was ſtill haunted with the Informations of this *Flood*, which draue her (as ſome reported) to ſuch a melancholly, that ſhee tooke no comfort in her buſineſſe, and as it was knowne afterward, ſhee hang'd her ſelfe in her owne girdle: the cauſe I will not ſay was *Floods*, but let ſuch as vnderſtood the manner of her life and carriage, in diſcretion, iudge and cenſure thereof rightly.

How Flood troubled an honeſt man onely for aſking him a queſtion.

THe debauched cariage of this *Flood* was ſuch, that if any but gazingly lookt vpon him, hee would be ſure to picke quarrels with him, and if he vſed not his ſpeeches with aduiſement, this *Flood* would take aduantage on his words, for the leaſt occaſion was ſufficient for him to make an action of, whoſe troubleſome courſes are verified as followeth: There was an honeſt man, belonging to Blackwall-hall, who as he ſtood in Guild-hall yard, ſaw *Flood* come forth with a payre of Taylors ſheares in his hand, of whom this man demanded what they coſt; why fellow (quoth *Flood*) in a clowniſh manner, Doſt thou thinke I ſtole them. Why no (quoth the other) yet I may aske a queſtion: A queſtion (quoth *Flood*) I pray thee what art thou? I am a man (quoth he.) A man (ſaid *Flood*) I will haue money from thee then. Money from me? (quoth the other) doe thy worſt, I care not for thee, and ſuch like were the words that paſſed betwixt them, and ſo they departed. But within a while after, *Flood* brought this honeſt man in queſtion about the Statute for buildings, which was about a little ſhop that he kept to ſell flaxe in, not, as *Flood* alledged, ſo ſufficiently plaſtered with lime and haire, of which he made ſuch a long declaration to the Court, that he ſo puſled the man, that he knew not well how to anſwer the ſame: and though *Flood* little preuailed in his ſuit, yet by his harſh roring language, and foule words

which

which he ſo clamoured againſt this honeſt man, that for quiernesſe ſake he was forced to giue ſome ſatisfaction to be rid of him.

How Flood *deceiued an Officer, and cunningly made him arreſt his owne maſter.*

VPon a time this *Flood* comes to one of the Cities officers, and tels him he hath a Writ to ſerue vpon a free-man for ſetting a forraigner on worke, of which this Officer was glad to heare of, and thinking thereby to get money, as hee had oftentimes before ſo done by *Floods* meanes, goes with him; where coming together to a Worſhipfull Gentlemans of this City, they found a foraine painter, new colouring the Gentlemans houſe wals, which Gentleman (to ſpeake truly) a Worſhipfull Knight, though not named, ſeeing *Flood* and the other Officer in the yard, comes forth and demanded what newes: Marry (quoth *Flood*) here is a Writ to ſerue on your Worſhip for maintaining forraigners, and thereupon giues the ſame to the Officer to doe his duty; at which the Officer lookes very blancke, conſidering it was his owne Maſter on whom he ſhould ſerue it, yet notwithſtanding according to his oath ſo done it was, and his Maſter was forced to compound with *Flood*: who after tooke a pride in ſuch trecherous actions, making himſelfe merry at the Officer, whom hee had cunningly brought to arreſt his owne maſter.

of

of Floods *ingratitude for a Dutch Chandlers benevolence to him lying in the Compter.*

THis *Flood*, in acting of many of these his arch knaueries, was at length outstripped by a fellow cunninger then himselfe, and being ouerthrowne in an action, and condemned in a round sum of money, for want of sureties was laid in the Compter; where lying in prison in much necessity, there was a Dutch Chandler, I will not say dwelling neere vnto Newgate, that in pitty oftentimes sent him much relieſe, as meat and drinke from his owne table both at dinner and supper, and now and then some small peeces of money to comfort him, with an intent after his imprisonment to draw him to his friendship, and that *Flood* should be a trusty staffe to defend him from all informations that any other Informer should haue against him, for commonly these Dutch Chandlers are much troubled with those kind of people, and therefore this *Flood* he purchased to make his pillar to leane on: This passed on, and many courtesies were sent to him lying in prison by the Dutch Chandler, which were all as butter melted in the Sunne; for after when *Flood* had got his liberty, and followed againe his former courses of life, this Dutch Chandler was the first man he brought in action, and for all his forepassed fauours receiued at his hands, he was the party hee made most prize of.

How Flood came to search a Tauerne in ſeruice time, and how finely the Vintner requited him.

Flood growing malitious againſt a Tauerne-keeper of London, whoſe name I omit, came vpon a Sabbath day in Seruice time, and brought the Church-wardens to his houſe, where finding certaine good fellowes taking their morning draught, ſought to haue him preſented: but the Vintner hauing a ready wit, wrought as cunning a trick to bring both *Flood* and the Church-wardens into the ſame treſpaſſe; ſo the foreſaid Tauerne-keeper, ſeeing himſelfe fallen into the danger of the Law, ſayd as followeth, Maſter Church-wardens, and you Maſter *Flood*, I pray you be good vnto me, I am a young beginner, and a little trouble will much hinder me, therefore I pray you ſtand my good friends, and in kindneſſe take a cup of wine, and withall called for a diſh of roſt beefe, which the plaine dealing Church-wardens well accepted of, and withall *Flood* being a hungry fellow, was not behind in the ſame giuen breakfaſt; which being finiſhed, quoth *Flood*, this ſhall not ſerue your turne, for I muſt haue money from you, and it is not your bribing breakfaſt ſhall ſatisfie my turne. Why haue, replied the Vintner, Thou art as deepe in the fault as I, or any of theſe my cuſtomers, for the Church-warders and thy ſelfe alſo haue both eaten and drunke here in my houſe in ſeruice time, of which I now take witneſſe, therefore doe thy worſt, I care not for thee. At which

words *Flood* grew a little pacified, and was contented to let the Vintner goe vnpresented for that time, and euer after those Churchwardens much fauoured the said Tauerne.

How Flood *out-braued a Citizen with a red nose.*

VPon a time *Flood* being railing and roring in Guild-hall, as his manner was, a Citizen who had a red nose, a very substantiall man, rebuked him, calling him brazen fac'd fellow to be so audacious in so reuerent a place as that was. Brazen fac'd fellow (quoth *Flood*) if your copper nose Sir were set on my brazen face it would make a very rich show, which words not onely daunted the Citizen, but made him silently passe away much abashed. For rogue, rackall, slaue, and runnagate, were as common in *Floods* mouth, as *how doe you sir* to a man of courtsie.

Of his churlish keeping the walkes in Moore-fields.

TO speake yet further of churlish condition, he was chosen (being fit for a troublesome office) to ouersee the walkes in Moore-fields, and like the Pinder of *Wakefield* to preuent the intercourse of people ouer the grasse, and not to suffer them to make other paths beside the walkes. To which office being chosen, he got him a sturdy browne bill, and like a valiant champion intercepted all in-

rodes ouer the Fields, saluting neyther old nor young, rich nor poore, Gentleman or other, in such sort that he had many roring combats, and much mischiefe was done by his harsh behauiour, wherin he not only brake many a shin-pate, but set certaine hookes vnder the Railes, whereby sundry people (stooping vnder the Railes) tore their cloakes, bands and apparel, and so spoiled their cloathes in such sort, that he was not without many bitter curses, and now and then hee caused sundry of the ruder & vnrulier sort of people to sit in the stockes, for their stubbornesse in crossing the Walkes. And many other prancks hee there plaid, which though he were not ashamed to act, you modesty forbids me relate: in which he shewed himselfe rather a beast then a man, so farre he forgat Christianity and honestly, that he lost all humanitie: and for that cause hee was very deseruedly put from that meanes, which had beene sufficient (if honestly vsed) to haue maintained a man to liue well vpon.

Of his shamelesse bragging and boasting of base conditions.

NEuer was there (I thinke) the like audacious and shameleſſe fellow liuing in this Citie, nor any of a more impudent carriage before his betters, for to some, to whom hee was farre vnequall would he most vpbraidingly say with a full mouth, what, know you not *Griffin Flood*? bring I not the most milke to your payle? is it not I that

bring backs to your mill. I tell you *Griffin Flood* (by his Informations) shall make men quake: furthermore, to my knowledge I saw him once stand in the middle of Guild-hall, with his armes akembow on both sides, with a number of people about him, where hee being not ashamed, boastingly said, I thinke in my conscience I am the veriest knaue in all England, and when I am buried, this shall bee my Epitaph:

Here lyeth Griffin Flood *full low in his graue,*
Which liued a Rascall and died a Knaue.

Of his manners and troublesome carriage in the time of his imprisonment.

REturne wee now to his imprisonment in *Newgate*, where since his comming thither, the other prisoners haue beene so troubled with his railing language, that they accounted him rather a monster then a man, and such quarrels hee bred amongst them, that they many times fell together by the eares, so that day nor night could they bee quiet for him, for what with his cursing, banning, roaring, and blaspheming, hee shewed himselfe rather an Atheist then a Christian, and little remorse of conscience possessed him, and all his former offences came little to his remembrance, especially these petty abuses before rehearsed; but the maine ground of his imprisonment, which was for the murther of *Iohn Chipperfield* Vintener, something terrified him, and a little troubled his Conscience, fearing lest heauy on a murtherers soule, and the

reuenge thereof howely thunders in his eares: so by this *Flood* was it here verified; for vpon a night in New-gate as hee lay in his bed, in his dreame a fearfull vision appeared vnto him, which was (as hee thought) the ghastly shape of the man hee had murthered, with a bleeding wound in his breast gaping wide open, threatning as it were a speedy reuengement, at which *Flood* in his sleepe cryed out most fearefully, the Diuell, the Diuell pursues me, helpe, helpe, hee will teare me in pieces, with such like words of terror and amazement, that many of the Prisoners affrighted rose from their sleepes, and came to pacifie him in this his distracted agonie: for such were his fits in New-gate, and so distempered was his braine, that he continued there in great discontent without any patience.

Of a reuenge certaine Tapsters tooke vpon him in New-gate.

A Man he was, that few loued, neither in Prison nor without, and therefore came many thither to vexe and torment him: amongst the rest in a merry vaine came certaine Tapsters to him in Prison, belike some which hee had wronged by his troublesome informations, who in stead of comforts brought him douts, and in stead of reliefes gaue him griefes; for euery one called for his Can of beere, saying to him in mockage, heere Mr. *Flood*, I drinke to you, heere Mr. *Flood*, a health to you, and such like seuerally, each of them tossing off his beere, giuing him onely the

empty Cans, but therein neuer a droppe of drinke, whereupon *Flood* grew so inraged, that he enstil'd them with no better then Slaues and Rogues, and for their sakes vow'd a reuenge (if euer at liberty) against all other Tapsters.

And to put the same in practice, hee presently sent for a debtor of his which was a Tapster, that owed him a certaine sum of money, which fellow in pitty, by reason of his imprisonment brought him a part thereof, thinking therewith in that his extremity to content him; but *Flood* as his churlish custome euer was, so kept hee his old order, and would not receiue lesse then his whole debt; whereupon the fellow goes his wayes and bids him recouer it by action: which *Flood* with a sterne looke threatned to doe, but afterward considering how his case stood, and how that (in prison) hee lay much impouerished, sent for some part of his money before promised. Not so, quoth the Tapster, for I am otherwise minded; returning him this answer, according to the Prouerbe:

He that will not while he may,
When he would he shall haue nay.

So was it with *Flood*, when he might haue liued well, and in good gouernment, the want of grace and seruing God, cut him off with a nay, where then being tempted by the deuill, hee ranne himselfe so deepe into the danger of the law, that his life answered it with an vntimely death.

How after all theſe his troubleſome courſes of life, he was for a murther preſſed to death.

NOw to come to the laſt period of his ſhame and deuilliſh manners, in an agony of wrath (furthered on by Satan) he moſt wickedly ſtabbed a Conſtable, and withall a Vintner both at one time, whereof the Vintner, after he had long lyen languiſhing, died as a man murthered by wilfull violence, for which this *Flood* was atached, impriſoned, arraigned, and put to tryall, but by no perſwaſions would he commit himſelfe to the Law, but moſt obſtinately ſtood to the ſeuere iuſtice of the Bench, who according to cuſtome, cenſured him to the Preſſe, where he receiued his deſerts, by being bruiſed in terrible manner to a moſt fearfull death: whoſe execution was performed in the preſſing yard at Newgate, vpon the 18. of *Ianuary* this preſent yeare.

FINIS.